

- 323 In both communities it was said that men and women make pots, and of five pots bought at Bendiagalge at different times three were said to have been made by men and two by women. Further, it was agreed that pots had been made for a very long time and our informants at Sitala Wanniya said that they were made in their grandfather's grandfather's time, the longest period we ever heard a Vedda mention. A small pot, the upper right-hand pot of Plate LXII, made by Poromala of Bingoda, has a rough chevron pattern upon it; no importance or meaning was attached to this, which was avowedly copied from a pot obtained by barter. The thick open pot without a lip shown in the lower right-hand corner was made by Poromala (Walaha) who volunteered the information that the oldest pots were lipless. The large pot in the centre of the upper row was made by his wife. The pot to the left of this was made by Poromala (Walaha) and the pot underneath this by Randu Wanniya. It is worthy of note that though many fragments of wheel-made pottery were found in the upper layers of the floor of the Bendiagalge caves, no trace of pottery was found in the deepest layer associated with the quartz implements figured in Chapter I.
- [53]
[177]
- [172]

TOOLS AND WEAPONS.

- 411 The bow and arrow with the axe are the only iron tools used by the Veddas for the chase, for fighting, and for general domestic use. The iron arrow and axe heads are obtained by barter, as are the areca nut-cutters and strike-a-lights which most Veddas now possess. To a limited extent the areca nut-cutters are used as tools, for we have seen the final polishing and trimming of arrow shafts performed with these.
- [437]

- 411 No spells are recited or other magic used when making axes or bows and arrows. At Henebedda the wood of the *kobbevel* (322 *Allophylus cobbe*) is used for the bow; a sapling is peeled and shaved down until the desired amount of flexibility is obtained, it is then stained black. The bow string is made of the bast of a tree called *aratu* (*Terminalia chebula*), the same is used to bind that part of the shaft of the arrow pierced by the tang of the arrow head, the binding being afterwards covered with gum or resin obtained from the timbral tree (*Diospyros* 314 *embayopteris*).

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element as they are in the midst of a civilized crowd. They are [8] different beings at ease in their own forests. I have travelled by night with Veddahs for my guides over the plains and through the forests of Bintenne, and have been struck with their altered demeanour. In their own hunting grounds, they are no longer the scared and cowering creatures I have described. They are "at home;" and seem to assert their freedom. Bows in hand, their axes hanging from their shoulders, they stride noiselessly [481] along, with head erect, and independent air as though they were every one's equal, and had none to fear.

As their chief pursuit is hunting, whether for game or honey, [411] their constant weapons, without which they never stir, are a bow, two or three arrows, and a very small axe (for cutting honey-combs out of trunks of trees), shaped with a hollow in the lower part of the blade to enable it to hang conveniently upon the shoulder. They also carry a larger axe, stuck into the waist-string at their back. [412]

The bow is long, from five feet eight to about six feet six inches in length, rudely made of tough elastic wood*—a bow, which a muscular Englishman would bend with an effort, long [447] practice has taught the slightly-built Veddah to string with ease; and I have seen a boy use a bow which caused me some exertion to bend. The strings, which are exceedingly strong, are twisted of different kinds of bark and fibres†. The arrows, which are [283] about a yard long, are headed with a sharp iron blade, often nearly six inches long and an inch wide, about the formation of which they are still as "curious" as when Knox wrote of them, and if a blade be given them, they will now, as they did then, grind or beat it out to the shape and thinness they most approve.‡

The method in which "they bespeak their arrows to be made," [439] and their mode of barter generally, which Teunent believes still to exist among them, have long been exploded.§ They are not

* They chiefly use the wood of the following trees, doonoomadala (*stereospermum chelonoides*), the kekala (*cyathocalyx zylaniensis*), a creeper called [281] kobbéwal, or the pandero tree.

† Chiefly the fibre of the niyanda (*sensiviera zylanica*), and the bark of a creeper called the areloowel.

‡ "They are so curious of their arrows that no smith can please them. The king once to gratify them for a great present they brought him, gave all of them his best made arrow-blades, which nevertheless would not please their humour. For they went all of them to a rock by a river, and ground them into another form." Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63 (folio).

§ "It hath been reported to me by many people, that a wilder sort of them, when they want arrows, will carry their loads of flesh in the night; and hang it up in a smith's shop, also a leaf cut in the form they will have their arrows made and hang by it; which if the smith do make according to their pattern, they will requite, and bring him more flesh; but if he make

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222 to catch the hum of bees, which so instantaneously struck his ear. Their forest life naturally quickens their powers both of seeing and hearing, and renders them, in these respects, far superior to those whose more civilized lives do not compel them to rely on those faculties for their daily food.

They take honey in the manner common to the Singhalese. The bee-hunter enlarges with his small axe the hole in the tree at which the bee enters, and putting his mouth to the aperture, blows into it. This has generally the effect of making the bees fly out; or, at least, of making them vacate the comb, and retire into the innermost recesses of the hollow tree, when the honey can be taken with the hand. If this do not succeed, however, a second puff, after the bee-hunter has chewed some aromatic substance, has the desired effect.

222 Taking the honey of the bambara (*apis Indica*), a large and
 283 very venomous bee, is a much more serious affair. This bee hives
 481 on very lofty trees, or in clefts of precipitous rocks. If on a tree, the hunter ties tendrils to it, and armed with a bundle of blazing faggots, climbs to the vicinity of the comb and smokes the bees out, being often severely stung during the operation. If in a cleft of rock, he will, if he cannot otherwise approach it, lower himself with ropes made of creepers, and take the honey by the same process.

261 To the Veddahs, honey is not only favourite food, but valuable as an object of barter, for the Kandyans prize it greatly for medicinal purposes. They use it, too, as Knox tells us, for preserving flesh. "They cut a hollow tree and put honey in it, and then fill it with flesh, and stop it with clay, which lies for a reserve to eat in time of want."* And when they are short of food, they mix honey with decayed wood, and so eat it. It satisfies their craving more readily than plain honey. Davy properly describes the practice, as "not so much for nourishment as to distend the empty stomach and to allay the distressing feelings of emptiness and the pains of hunger." It is curious that Tennent should have entirely omitted all allusion to this remarkable custom. "Romla" is the term used by the Veddahs, for this decayed wood, and the practice I have described may have given rise to the epithet, which Knox applies to the "wild sort" called "Ramba Veddahs," who, he says, "never shew themselves"—but no "sort" is so called now, nor is the name remembered.†

* Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63.

[824] † Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63. The wood so used is chiefly that of the *Priminia* creeper (*Strychnos anopholia*, Mill.), the ettamla—wild mango (*Mangifera Indica*, Quin.), the weera (*Hemicycelia sepiaria*, W. and A.), the rêna, the nooga, a species of fig; any wood, indeed, not poisonous, is used. They reject the wood of the kaduru (*Cerbera odallum*, Gmelin.), the goda

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
 835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters
 is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for
 instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by
 the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he
 made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
 583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a
 bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama,
 whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
 591 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then,
 the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home,
 it may be a *kanava* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the
 common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
 291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man
 a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some
 six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *niyande*
 (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded
 [283] to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a
 247 bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned
 to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the
 Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his
 power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards
 762 the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew
 out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two
 sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary;
 but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour
 his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us;
 she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to
 name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda
 515 hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there?
 Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is
 only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty
 of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddass of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *waruge*, the best
 Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But
 565 for the Veddass of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling
 515 them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliyo*, and saying it was their duty in old-time
 to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much
 water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the
 saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the
 Veddass of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature
 after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a
 rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other?

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *waruges*; and each has its own story:

173 The Morana *waruge* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for
 the *mora* fruit when it was out of season, and had his want proclaimed.